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THE LORD'S PRAYER
AND THE
ANGELIC SALUTATION
BY BISHOP CHALLONER

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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THE LORD'S PRAYER AND
THE ANGELIC SALUTATION

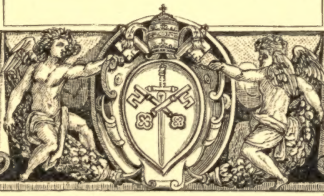




THE
 LORD'S PRAYER
 AND
 THE ANGELIC
 SALUTATION
 BY
 BISHOP CHALLONER
 LONDON
 SOCIETY OF SS. PETER
 AND PAUL



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W. R. CHICK

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THE LORD'S PRAYER



THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE OUR FATHER

CONSIDER first, that divine hope cannot lie idle in the soul, nor suffer her to be idle, but exercises the soul in prayer, as the great means of obtaining all the good she hopes for. Now all the good that we are to hope and pray for, is marked out to us by our Lord, and comprised in a very few words, in that excellent prayer which he has taught us, commonly called, *The Lord's Prayer*. Here, in seven short petitions, we pray for all that we are any ways authorized by the word of God to hope for, for ourselves, or for our neighbours, for body or soul, for time or eternity. Here we are taught to make acts of all the most necessary virtues, of faith, hope, love of God, conformity to his blessed will, charity for our neighbours, forgiveness of injuries, and repentance for our sins. Here we daily make a spiritual communion, by aspiring after the bread of life. O the excellence of this heavenly prayer; so short in words, that the meanest capacity may easily learn it, and so copious in its contents, that they might

fill whole volumes! And what a pity that the generality of Christians should run over this admirable prayer, with so little sense of what they are saying, and with dispositions so opposite to the import of those sacred petitions!

Consider 2dly, that in the beginning of this divine prayer, we call God *our Father*; and we are authorized to call him so by the Son of God himself. Stand astonished, my soul, at this high favour: what greater dignity can any creature be raised to, than to be called and to be a child of God? to have him for our Father, who made heaven and earth, and who fills heaven and earth with his infinite majesty? O my soul, see thou never degenerate from this dignity of a child of God, by behaving thyself unworthy of such a Father. See thou never more make thyself a slave to sin, or Satan: O child of heaven, lie no longer groveling in the mire of the earth. In this prayer we are taught to address ourselves to our Father, *who is in heaven*, to the end, that we may reflect whither we are to direct our thoughts when we pray, and that we may not suffer any attachment to the things of the earth, by love and affection, to hinder them from freely flying up to heaven. My soul, where are thy thoughts in the time

of prayer? Do not irregular affections chain them down to the earth, when they ought to be in heaven?

Consider 3dly, what encouragement it ought to be to a Christian, when he goes to his prayers, to remember that he is presenting his petitions to "his Father:" and to such a Father, who has an incomparable love for his children; who encourages them to ask; who teaches them in this excellent prayer, what they are to ask for; who has frequently promised to grant them what they ask, provided it be good for them; and whose power, riches, bounty, and mercy, are all equally infinite. O! let this title of *our Father*, which we give to God in the Lord's prayer, raise our hopes in him; let it inflame our hearts with love for so amiable a Father; let it bespeak a reverential awe, a filial fear of offending such a parent, and an earnest desire of being ever a dutiful and obedient child.

Conclude ever to esteem and love this divine prayer; and daily to use it with a serious attention, and suitable devotion.





HALLOWED BE THY NAME

CONSIDER first, that the first petition of the Lord's prayer is contained in these words, "Hallowed be thy name:" that is, may thy name be ever blessed and praised, honoured and glorified! This petition claims the first place in the Lord's prayer, as its undoubted right; because the first and principal duty of a Christian is, to love his God with his whole heart and soul, and therefore the first and principal thing he ought to desire and pray for is, the great honour and glory of God. His love for his God makes him rejoice, to think that he is, in himself, infinitely happy and glorious, and will be so for all eternity, and that he is, and will be eternally adored, praised, and glorified by all the Angels and Saints. But, then, it grieves him to think, how little this infinite goodness is known in this miserable world; how little this great object of his love is loved here below; how little he is honoured, praised, and glorified by these very souls of ours, made by him, and for him, and which can never be happy, but in the love and enjoyment of him. And therefore the intent of this petition is to remedy so great an evil; by earnestly begging of the Sovereign Good, the source of all grace

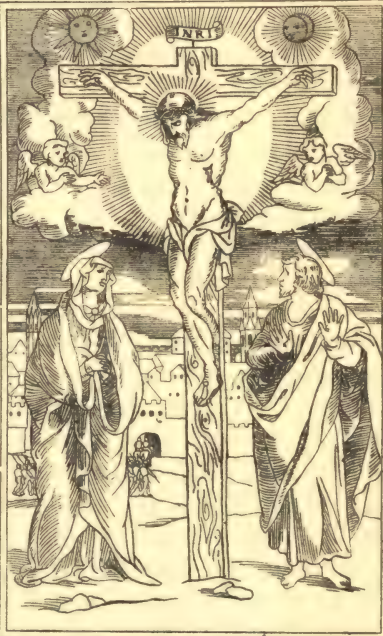
and good, that he would glorify his own most sacred name in us, by effectually teaching us to love, serve, and glorify him.

Consider 2dly, that this petition contains an act of divine love, even of perfect charity and benevolence, inasmuch as it expresses the longing desires of the soul for the greater honour, praise, and glory of her Maker, as the only good she can wish, or procure to his infinite Majesty. It contains also an act of the most perfect charity for himself; because, in praying that God's name may be glorified in all, and by all, she desires, in the first place, that it may be glorified in herself, and by herself: now what greater good can she wish, or procure for herself, than that God may be ever glorified in her, and by her, and that her whole being may be ever consecrated to his glory, for time and eternity? And as the most perfect act of charity for our neighbours, is that by which we labour to procure their greatest good, and the like good as we desire for ourselves; whilst by this petition, we dedicate our whole selves to the divine glory: we do as much for our neighbours also, by praying that God's name may be sanctified in them all, and by them all, both now and for ever. And this love we here exercise, both with regard to ourselves and our neighbours,

is pure and perfect charity; because God is both the beginning and the end of it; inasmuch as we love both ourselves and our neighbours, with relation to the greater glory of God. This divine charity, in all its branches, is exercised in this first petition.

Consider 3dly, that in praying for the hallowing or sanctifying of the name of God, we pray in effect, for the sanctification of the whole world; that the knowledge of the true and living God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, may be spread over all the earth; that all nations may serve him, all tongues may praise him, and all hearts may love him; in a word, that all men upon earth may be Saints, and may be all happily united in publishing the glory of God's name, not merely by their words, but much more by their lives; for this is the most perfect way of sanctifying the name of God. See then, my soul, the vast extent of this petition, by which we pray for all glory to God; and for all good to man, both for here and hereafter; and let thy heart go along with thy tongue, as often as thou repeatest it.

Conclude to let this earnest desire of the greater glory of God in all things, be ever the predominant passion of thy heart, and he will glorify thee for all eternity.



THY KINGDOM COME

CONSIDER first, that in this second petition, we pray for the kingdom of God. Now we find in holy writ, that the kingdom of God is understood in three different ways. First, of the eternal kingdom of God in heaven. 2dly, of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, in his Church upon earth. 3dly, of the mystical kingdom of God, in our souls, according to that of our Saviour, (Luke, xvii, 21,) “The kingdom of God is within you.” And in this petition, “thy kingdom come,” we pray for the kingdom of God, according to all these three acceptations of his kingdom. See, my soul, how ample and extensive this petition is, and how noble and sublime those things are, which thou art here taught to petition for. Stand astonished that a poor worm of the earth, extracted from nothing, and which is infinitely more humbling, taken up from the dunghill of sin and corruption, should be authorized to aspire after a kingdom, even an eternal kingdom; to live and reign for endless ages, with the living God. Yet this we are here taught to

pray for, with an assurance of being heard, if we pray as we ought, from him who has the disposing of this kingdom. And this is one part of the import of this petition, and contains an act of divine hope.

Consider 2dly, that as the kingdom of God is often taken in the Scriptures to signify that spiritual kingdom which Christ came to establish upon earth; and his reign in his Church, in which he is both King and Priest for ever; so, in this petition, we are also to have an eye upon the propagation, and exaltation of this kingdom of Christ; by earnestly begging that the reign of Satan and of Sin, may have an end; that all infidels may be enlightened by the light of the gospel; that all heresies, schisms, errors, and abuses may be rooted out; that all vices and scandals may be abolished among Christians, and that divine faith, hope, and charity, with all other virtues, may reign both in all the pastors of God's Church, and in all the people of God. So that here is also exercised an act of perfect love, both with relation to God, by desiring that his kingdom, his grace, and his truth, may be victorious over all the world; and with relation to all mankind, by praying that all men may be subdued to that

happy kingdom, and may be true and faithful subjects to this great King.

Consider 3dly, that, as true charity should begin at home, we are particularly to have in view in this petition, the establishment of the kingdom of God in our own souls, by heartily desiring, and earnestly praying, that God may come to us, and take full possession of our souls, by his grace; that he may set up his throne within us, and reign without control, and without rival in our hearts; that he may suppress all rebellions there, subdue all our passions, and make our whole interior his own, by giving us a strong and perfect love for him. O blessed kingdom of divine love! When wilt thou come to me? When shalt thou be established in my soul? When shall thy sacred flames consume in me all that is in any ways displeasing to my God, or that dares to rebel against him?

Conclude to make it thy business to seek, in the first place, this kingdom of God, by procuring his justice in thy soul; and, as he has promised, nothing else shall be wanting to thee. God must first be king in thy soul here, if thou ever hope to arrive at his eternal kingdom hereafter.



THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH,
AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

CONSIDER first, that in this third petition, the soul embraces with all her heart, the holy will of God, earnestly desiring and praying that both she herself, and every soul upon earth, may ever be, both a faithful servant and true lover of the Divine will, even as the Saints and Angels are in Heaven, who are so absorbed in the love of God, that they have no other will but the will of God. So that this petition, like the two former, contains an act of divine love. A love of benevolence to God, inasmuch as the soul here desires to give all to God, and to bring both her own will and all other wills to him; that all may embrace, bow down, and adore, love, serve, and obey the sacred will of God and conform to it in all things. And a love of the most perfect charity to ourselves and to our neighbours; in desiring and procuring for ourselves and them so great a good, as is this perfect conformity to the will of God, and that God's holy will may be ever done, both in us and by us.

Consider 2dly, how just it is that we should ever adhere to the holy will of God, and pray with all our hearts, that his holy will may be done in all things. The will of God is always good, is always right and equitable, is always beautiful; and therefore we ought always to embrace it and love it. He perfectly knows what is best, and what is best for us; and if we will leave ourselves in his hands, he will certainly order all things for the best, and therefore it is our wisest way, if we love ourselves, to give ourselves up to his holy will. The will of God is all-powerful, and must take place; and therefore it is madness to set ourselves against his almighty will; it serves for nothing but to make us miserable. The will of God in effect, is God himself, and therefore we must ever submit and obey it; we must always bow down and adore his sacred will.

Consider 3dly, that the will of God ought to be the Christian's rule in all things. In all our deliberations, whether with regard to temporals or spirituals, we ought first to consult the holy will of God, crying out to him with the convert, St. Paul, Acts, ix, 6, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And this with a sincere desire to know, and a perfect readiness

of mind to follow his will, whichever way he is pleased to order or direct; not seeking that his will should bend to ours, but that ours may ever conform to his. And as, in all our doings, we must to the best of our knowledge and power, follow the will of God; so, in all our sufferings we must resign and submit ourselves to his blessed will, assuring ourselves, that nothing happens to us in this kind but by the appointment of heaven, and that all comes from the hand of him that knows what is best, because he is infinitely wise, and sends what is for the best, because he is infinitely good and good to us.

Conclude ever to recite this third petition of the Lord's prayer, with these dispositions of the love of God and of the holy will, and of a perfect conformity in all things to his holy will. We read of a servant of God (Gregory Lopez) that for some years, at every breath, repeated the petition, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven!" O that we could always be in the like happy sentiments!





GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY
BREAD

CONSIDER first, that after seeking in the three first petitions, the greater glory of the name of God, the propagation of his kingdom, and the execution of his will both in heaven and in earth; we are taught in the fourth petition to pray for all necessaries for ourselves, both for soul and body, under the name of our *daily bread*, which we here beg for this short day of our mortal life, in order to support us in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, till we come to our true country and to the happy day of everlasting light and life, in the heavenly kingdom of our Father. As to the things of this world we pray for them with more indifference, as for things of lesser consequence; and which, if we seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, our Father has promised to furnish us with, viz. as far as he shall see expedient for us; and we pray for them for *to-day*, being forbidden to be solicitous for them for *to-morrow*. But what we are here more earnestly to pray for, is, the

bread which is to support the spiritual life of our souls; viz., the grace of God, the word of God, and the holy sacraments. And this we beg both for ourselves and for all the world, from the great Pastor of souls.

Consider 2dly that the holy Fathers expound this petition as meant in particular, of the *bread of life*, which we receive in the blessed Eucharist, for the food, nourishment, strength, and life of our souls. This bread is the sacred body and blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God; who calls himself the "living bread which came down from heaven," John, vi, 51, and assures us, that he "that eateth of this bread shall live for ever:" and that "the bread which he will give, is his flesh for the life of the world," v. 52. This is here styled *our daily bread*, because given us for this our day of life, and given to be our daily support, by our partaking of it, either really, or spiritually, every day. O! my soul, ever aspire after this heavenly bread, the source of all grace and true life. Admire and adore the incomprehensible ways, by which thy God seeks to communicate himself to thee; and see thou correspond with his goodness and love, by turning daily to him, and giving thy whole self to him.

Consider 3dly, that the best way to answer the principal intent of this petition, is by making a spiritual communion (as often as we repeat these words, *give us this day our daily bread*) by a lively faith and hope in Jesus Christ, the true bread of life; by aspiring after him, by love and desire, and by inviting him to come and take full possession of our souls, and to unite them to himself for time and eternity. Happy those souls that frequently in the day communicate in this manner!

Conclude to pray for thy *daily bread* in such manner as to have ever principally in view this *bread of life*, and to labour to partake of it daily, at least, by a spiritual communion.





FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS
WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRES-
PASS AGAINST US

CONSIDER first, that in this fifth petition, our Lord has furnished us with a daily remedy for those many evils into which we daily fall. "We all offend in many things," James, iii, 2, and not a day passes, in which we are not contracting fresh debts to our great Master, either by omission or commission, in thought, word, or deed. Therefore we ought daily to sue for a discharge, and to call for mercy and forgiveness, with a truly penitent heart; and this is the design of this petition of the Lord's Prayer, which when recited with fervour, readily obtains the remission of those daily debts, and reinstates us in the good graces of our master. These lesser faults into which we daily fall, if neglected and suffered to grow and multiply upon us, are of worse consequence to our souls than we can well imagine; the water that comes into the ship by small chinks, if not daily pumped out, may in time, increase in such manner as to sink the vessel. That the like may never happen to our souls, we must be daily repenting for these daily sins, and offering up daily for them the sacrifice of

a contrite and humble heart, as often as we repeat this petition of the Lord's Prayer.

Consider 2dly, that besides the obligation of daily labouring to procure the discharge of these daily debts, we must see if we have not reason to apprehend a more heavy load of debt lying upon our souls, on account of our past sins; more especially if, in any part of our life, we have lived in mortal sin. Alas! the load of such debts of these is immense, a sum of ten thousand talents, which we are utterly unable to discharge of ourselves; and whether our repentance has been sufficient to apply to our souls the discharge purchased by the blood of Christ, we cannot tell. And therefore our best security is to be always repenting for our past sins, and to beg daily of God to forgive us all the sins of our youth and our ignorance, to cleanse us from our hidden sins, and to be merciful to us, with regard to the sins we may have any way occasioned in others. And with this penitential spirit, for all our past sins, known or unknown, we ought to recite this petition of the Lord's Prayer; and with it daily present ourselves like Magdalene, at the feet of our Redeemer, imploring his mercy, both for ourselves, and for all poor sinners.

Consider 3dly, that in this petition we beg of God to “forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.” Which words were added by our Lord, to put us in mind, that we must not look for forgiveness from God of the offences we commit against him, if we do not forgive him from our hearts, the offences which our neighbours commit against us. See, Christians, how much our Lord takes to heart our forgiving one another, and loving our very enemies; since, not content with frequently inculcating this duty on all other occasions, he was pleased to insert it in the very prayer he would have us daily to say, to the end we might never forget it. Let us then examine well our dispositions in this regard, and lay aside all rancour and animosity against our neighbours, when we go to sue for mercy from God; otherwise we shall never obtain the mercy we ask.

Conclude to take occasion, from this petition of the Lord’s Prayer, to practise daily these three lessons: first, of a hearty repentance for thy daily sins; 2dly, of daily renewing thy sorrow and contrition for thy past offences; and lastly, of daily exercising charity and mercy, in forgiving from thy heart all that have offended thee.



LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

CONSIDER first, that after begging of our Lord, in the foregoing petition, the forgiveness of the sins we have already committed, we here beg of him to preserve us from relapsing into any of our former offences, or being ever any more guilty of wilful sin. The true penitent abhors the monster of sin, beyond all other evils whatsoever; and therefore he is not content with seeking the remission of all his offences, but is ever solicitous to avoid the like evils, for the time to come; and therefore he flies the occasions of them, seeks to keep out of all dangerous temptations, and being sensible of his own weakness, he is earnest in prayer to beg of God to stand by him, and to help him to overcome all the enemies of his soul, and rather to let him die a thousand deaths, than to commit one wilful sin. And this is the principal meaning of this petition, "Lead us not into temptation," which ought to be recited by all Christians, with these dispositions of a great horror of sin, and a most earnest desire to be ever preserved from it.

Consider 2dly, in what sense we here beg of God “not to lead us into temptation;” since, as St. James says, chap. i, 13, “God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man,” viz., so as to incite, allure, or provoke to sin. No certainly; such temptations as these cannot be from God, who is essentially good, and ever abhors sin; but they are from the world, the flesh, and the devil; yet as these never have power to tempt us, but with God’s permission, nor strength to overcome us, but when we neglect to apply in a proper manner to God for his grace; therefore we make use of this expression, to signify our total dependence on God, and to beg that he would not give the enemy any power over us, nor suffer us to give ourselves up to him. Moreover, as those trials, which God often sends for the exercise of our virtue, and for the proof of our fidelity, are also in Scripture called temptations; such as afflictions, crosses, pains, &c., of which God is certainly the author and distributor; we beg of him, by these words, *Lead us not into temptation*, that with relation to all such trials as these, he would ever have regard to our weakness, and never lay upon us any load above our strength.

Consider 3dly, with regard to temptations, that they are no sins to us, if we give no way to them, nor bring them upon us by our own faults. So far from it, that they are often the occasions of very great good to our souls; by obliging us to watch and to pray the more, from the sense of our dangers; by keeping us humble, and by affording us the opportunity of gaining us many victories, and consequently as many glorious crowns for all eternity, as we have had conflicts with the enemy, by occasion of temptations. Wherefore it is not the meaning of this petition, to pray that we may never have any temptation, (for this might not be expedient for us) but that we may never yield to temptation. But as for the seeking, or desiring temptations, it would be too great a rashness to weak souls; and more especially with regard to temptations against purity, it would be a crime to affect them, or, without necessity, to expose one's self to them. Christians, let us learn to arm ourselves for this warfare, with the armour of the fear of God, and a lively faith; let us stand upon our guard by watching and praying; let us readily and heartily resist the first attacks of the enemy; let us bear with patience and humility



the labour and trouble of the conflict; but ever reject with horror the criminal satisfaction proposed by the enemy.

Conclude to observe these rules with regard to temptations, to join always an humble distrust in thyself with a firm confidence in God; and ever to have recourse to him, in all thy conflicts, by humble and fervent prayer, and thou shalt always come off with victory.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

CONSIDER first, that this petition is near akin to the two foregoing petitions; inasmuch as the main drift of the former of them was to deliver us from the evil of our past sins, and of the latter to keep us from the evil of sin, for the time to come; and this, in general, begs to be delivered from all evil, past, present, or to come. Now, of all these evils, sin is not only the greatest, but is, in some sense, the only thing that deserves to be called evil; because all other things that we call evils, are either the consequence of sin, or cease to be real evils, when not accom-

panied with sin. So that the main business of this petition is to beg of God that he would deliver us from all sin, past, present, or to come; from all the consequences of sin, and the punishments which our sins have deserved; from the slavery of our passions and sinful habits, and from the tyranny and possession of the Evil one, who has the dominion over all wilful sinners. Good God, for thy mercy sake, and through the precious blood of thy Son, our Redeemer, deliver us from all these dreadful evils!

Consider 2dly, by descending into particulars, all the scenes of numberless evils, to which we are liable, on account of sin, in this miserable world; and from which we here pray to be delivered by the mercy of God; such as public calamities, wars, plagues, famines, earthquakes, tempests, inundations, &c., besides a multitude of private evils, to which each particular person is so frequently exposed. Then all spiritual evils, which are much more deplorable, whether public or private; heresies, schisms, persecutions of the church, errors, abuses, oppressions of the poor, sacrileges, scandals, national vices, and the general reign of Satan and sin, in the thoughts, words, and

actions of the children of this world. And, with regard to the future, the dreadful evil of unprovided death, and final impenitence; the dismal sufferings of another world; the judgment and sentence of eternal damnation; and the second death of a miserable eternity. And do not so many and such lamentable evils well deserve that we should continually pray, that God in his mercy would deliver us all from having any share in them!

Consider 3dly, as to thyself in particular, how many and how great evils thou hast reason to apprehend, to be either actually upon thee, or to threaten thee on every side. Reflect on the multitude of thy past and present sins, infinitely more numerous, and more enormous than thou imaginest; the uncertainty, the weakness, and inconstancy of thy repentance; the dreadful debt of punishment due to thy sins, and how little thou hast done towards the discharge of it; the vices and passions thou art daily subject to; the many enemies that daily encompass thee, and are continually laying snares for thy soul; the corruption of thy own heart, the blindness of thy understanding, thy weakness in all that is good, and the violence of thy concupiscence, and inclina-

tions to evil. Then see what thou hast to apprehend of evil for the future, from the judgments of God ever hanging over the head of impenitent sinners, from the malice and subtilty of thy enemies, ever intent upon thy ruin; and the hold thou givest them by thy passions, and that unhappy self-love which keeps a continual correspondence with them; lastly, from that miserable death, judgment, and hell, which are the portion of all who, by occasion of mortal sin unrepented of, fall into the hands of the living God, and thou wilt be convinced of the necessity of thy continually crying out to thy holy Redeemer, Deliver us from all evil. Amen.

Conclude to embrace humble and fervent prayer, as the sovereign means to be delivered from all evils, past, present, or to come: and as these evils continually threaten thee, so let thy prayer also be in some measure continual.



THE ANGELIC SALUTATION



THE ANGELIC SALUTATION

CONSIDER first, that after the Blessed Virgin had been prepared by the purity of her conception and by the purity of her life; by the purity of her soul and of her body; of her heart and of her mind, and of all her actions and intentions, to conceive in her sacred womb the Son of God, whom she had long before conceived in her soul: the time appointed by her Lord being now come, the Archangel Gabriel was sent to her from heaven, upon the most solemn embassy that ever was: viz., to treat with this most humble maid, concerning the great work of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, by his taking flesh of her, in order to the redemption of mankind from Satan, sin, and hell; and reconciliation with God; and in order to the establishment of a new law, a new and everlasting covenant; a kingdom of heaven upon earth by grace, in favour of all that should embrace this grace, and an eternal kingdom for them hereafter in glory. But give ear now, my soul, to the Angel's address, and mark every word of it. The Angel being come in said to her, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women,"

Luke, i, 28. He greeted her with the word Ave or Hail, a word of salutation or congratulation with her, for all that God had done, and was about to do in her favour, and for his choosing her to be the happy instrument, that should give birth to the Source of all our good. O let heaven and earth join in this Ave of salutation and congratulation! as all heaven and earth are highly interested in the issue of this most sacred negotiation, which is to bring us innumerable benefits, both for time and eternity, by the Incarnation of the Son of God! And see, my soul, thou never forget to testify thy grateful sense of the share designed for thee in these graces and benedictions, by daily joining with suitable devotion, in this holy salutation and congratulation, as often as thou repeatest the Ave Maria.

Consider 2dly, how the Angel, in his salutation, styles the Blessed Virgin full of grace; to signify the supereminent degree of divine grace, to which God elevated her soul, to prepare her to be the mother of his Son. For she was full of all that habitual grace, which justifies and sanctifies the soul; full of faith and hope: full of divine charity, in both its branches; ever loving God with her whole heart, with

her whole soul, with all her mind, and with all her strength, and loving her neighbour as herself; she was full of humility, meekness, patience, obedience, and all other moral virtues; she was full of wisdom, godliness, the fear of the Lord, and all other gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit: her memory was full of holy thoughts; her understanding with the lights of God and divine truths; and her will with most fervent acts and affections of love, zeal, desire of the glory of God, of the coming of the Messiah, and of the redemption of the world. She was full of grace in all her thoughts, words, and works; her works were all full, by the purity of intention, the fervour and love, with which she performed them all. Many Saints have been full of grace; but none like this Queen and Mother of all the Saints: whose grace was proportioned to the great designs that God had upon her, and to the supereminent dignity to which she was chosen, of being Mother of God. O congratulate, my soul, with the Blessed Virgin, for this her fullness of grace; which went on continually increasing for the whole time of her life, by the good use she continually made of all God's gifts; and beg through her intercession thou

mayest, like her, faithfully correspond and diligently co-operate with every divine grace.

Consider 3dly, how the Angel adds in his salutation, “the Lord is with thee”; to signify the source from which all her fulness of grace flowed, and the extraordinary manner of God’s communicating himself and all his graces, to this most highly favoured of all his creatures. For our Lord was not only with the Blessed Virgin, by his essence, his presence, and his power, as he is with all men; not only by his sanctifying grace, as he is with all the just; but in a most extraordinary manner, by a far more eminent grace, a closer union and an higher sanctification. And therefore the Angel adds, “blessed art thou amongst women”; to express the supereminence of those graces and benedictions, with which she was blessed from heaven, and should still be blessed, more and more; as well as the innumerable blessings, that should be communicated to all mankind, through the fruit of her womb; and the blessings and praise that should on that account be given her by all generations. For as one woman by disobedience, in hearkening to the suggestions of the infernal serpent, was the beginning of all the maledictions that fell upon

all mankind; so one woman by her humble obedience to the proposals brought her by an Angel from heaven, was the beginning of all the benedictions, that were to come upon all mankind, from the blessed fruit of her womb; by whom also she crushed that serpent's head who first brought sin and death amongst us. O! see, my soul, with what sentiments of devotion thou oughtest to join with the Angel, and with the blessed St. Elizabeth, and with the whole Church of God, in this solemn address to the Virgin Lady: "blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," Luke i, 24.

Conclude ever to keep up in thy soul a grateful remembrance of all the great things, that God has done for the Blessed Virgin, and for us all, in the Incarnation of his Son, by a frequent and devout repetition of the Angelical salutation; always concluding it with that pious address of the Church, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen." O how just it is, that we should particularly crave the assistance of her prayers for that critical time, when we can do the least for ourselves, and when all is at stake for eternity.



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